

Observations of Comet Hyakutake (C/1996 B2)

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The apparition of Comet Hyakutake (C/1996 B2) in early 1996 presented the cometary community with the unique opportunity to observe the closest and brightest comet in the last 400 years. This talk will survey and summarize the most important results from observations of the Hyakutake, of which there were many: the discovery of x-ray emission from a comet, the discovery of the chemical species ethane, OCS, HDO, methyl cyanide, and acetylene in a comet, the detection of the nucleus in the infrared and radio, the spatial structure found for various parent molecules in the coma and jets, and the complex behavior found in the multiple jets, narrow tail, and "baby comets" emitted by the comet. The structure of this talk will emphasize what we have learned about the fundamental structures of a comet: the nucleus, the coma, the dust tail, and the plasma tail.

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